



TOWN OF COVENTRY, RI
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

STAFF REPORT

Project Name:	Picozzi Plat
Plan Type:	Minor Subdivision
Plan Review Phase:	Pre-Application
Owner/Applicant:	Domenico A. Picozzi
Address:	0 Read School House Road
Plat / Lot / Zone:	AP 89 Lot 9 Zone RR-2 Lot Size 8.24 acres
Existing Use:	Vacant
Proposed Use:	4 single-family houses
Description:	The applicant proposes to develop one commercial office building and two equipment storage buildings for contractor use, with development occurring in phases.

Background and Existing Conditions

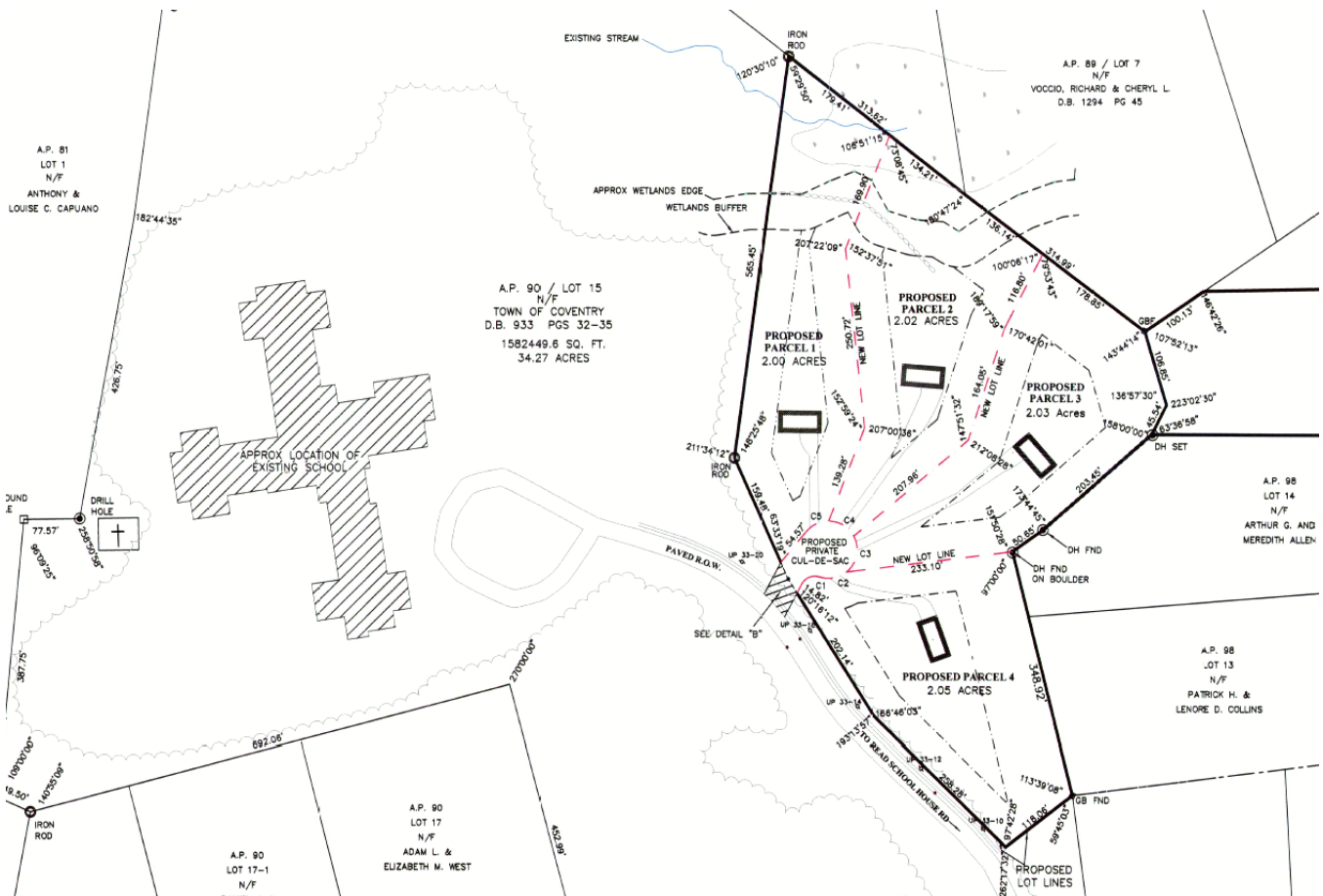


This item will be reviewed as a Pre-Application for a proposed Minor Subdivision of an 8.24-acre land-locked parcel at the location listed in the title block above. The subject parcel abuts the Washington Oak Elementary School; it was created as a result of the property owner's donation of 34.27 acres of land to the Town in 2008 to facilitate the development of the school. The property owners, the Town Council, and the School Department signed affidavits that allowed the owner/applicant to develop the subject parcel and use the school driveway to access any homes developed on the lot.

At present, the subject parcel consists of undeveloped land and is zoned RR-2, as are the school's property and the immediate abutters. There are wetlands located on the eastern corner of the lot. The site also lies within Zone "X" (defined as area outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplain) of the National Flood Insurance Maps for the Town of Coventry.

The Pre-Application meeting with the Planning Commission is the first step in the overall application process where no votes are taken, no notification is required, and the applicant does not get an approval or denial on the project. The applicant is provided with initial feedback from the Planning Commission with the intention to help shape the project moving forward.

Proposed Conditions



2/21/25

As submitted, the proposal would subdivide the subject parcel into four single-family house lots (as delineated by the dashed red lines in the site plan excerpt above). Proposed Parcel 1 would be exactly 2.00 acres, Proposed Parcel 2 would be 2.02 acres, Proposed Parcel 3 would be 2.03 acres, and Proposed Parcel 4 would be 2.05 acres.

Access to the proposed houses would be provided via a proposed private cul-de-sac off the existing driveway to the school; such access will be assured with a formalized easement. The applicant has also delineated the approximate edge of the wetlands as well as the wetlands buffer at which point the lot lines for the proposed subdivision will end.

Zoning

As the subject parcel is zoned RR-2 (Rural Residential), the proposed single-family residential use is permitted.

Because the subject parcel lacks frontage (given the unique process which led to its creation as a landlocked parcel, as summarized in the Background and Existing Conditions section), the applicant must seek a dimensional variance, which elevates this application to the Planning Commission for review and decision-making.

Based on the information the applicant has provided to-date, it appears that frontage is the only dimensional standard for which relief will be required. That being said, Staff will seek more information at the next phase of review to confirm that all four proposed lots will satisfy the minimum dimensional regulations for the RR-2 zone as they pertain to setbacks, lot coverage, etc.

Interdepartmental Review and Comments

Please see the attached report from the Technical Review Committee (dated February 10, 2025) for interdepartmental comments on this application.

After the February TRC meeting, Staff contacted the School Department for additional comments, and the Superintendent raised the following concerns about the proposed subdivision:

Don Cowart, Superintendent of Coventry Public Schools, via email dated February 13, 2025:

“It is important to acknowledge both the schools' gratitude for the land donation and the Picozzi family's right to develop their property. However, the primary concern remains the impact on the school's driveway and the bus traffic throughout the day.

Key considerations include:

- **Traffic Flow & Safety:** The addition of residential traffic to the school driveway raises concerns about congestion, particularly during peak drop-off and pick-up times. The safety of students, buses, and pedestrians should be a priority.
- **Driveway Width & Capacity:** If the current driveway was designed solely for school traffic, it may not adequately accommodate additional residential vehicles. A traffic study may be necessary to assess whether widening or reconfiguring the entrance is required.
- **Emergency Access:** The fire and emergency access comments from the technical review should be carefully addressed to ensure compliance with safety regulations.
- **Legal & Long-Term Considerations:** While an easement will formalize access, the Town should ensure this agreement includes provisions for future maintenance responsibilities, liability, and potential conflicts between school operations and residential uses.
- **Construction:** Just some consideration on our busiest time of year and the busiest time of day when moving large loads or vehicles down the driveway.
- **Events:** Washington Oak is the largest elementary school and tends to draw large attendance to school/community events. This can significantly impact parking and traffic.”

Regarding the first two considerations above, the Engineering Department conducted two traffic studies on February 24 and February 25 to review the school during peak traffic conditions (school beginning and ending times) to determine whether the driveway as currently configured can adequately accommodate the additional traffic that will be generated by the four proposed single-family houses. The school driveway has a width of 21 feet, 6 inches, as well as berms and drainage. Following review of the Engineering Department’s observations, as well as discussion between the Town Engineer, DPW Director, and Planning Director, it has been determined that the additional traffic from the 4 single family houses will have minimal impact on day-to-day operations as well as special event traffic flow to the school itself, and no changes to the physical layout of the school driveway are needed.

Fire and emergency access considerations were discussed at the Technical Review Committee (TRC). With respect to legal considerations, Planning staff will further confer with the Assistant Solicitor to discuss any potential maintenance and liability arrangements.

Pre-Application Recommendations

Staff recommend that the Planning Commission allow the applicant to proceed to the Preliminary Plan stage of application and review, with the following guidance:

1. The applicant should refer to the February 10, 2025 Technical Review Committee report as well as this Planning Staff report for direction on plan edits to make at the Preliminary Plan application.



TOWN OF COVENTRY
Department of Planning & Development
1675 Flat River Road, Coventry, RI 02816
Phone (401) 822-9184 Fax (401) 822-6236

TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: February 10, 2025
PROJECT NAME: "Picozzi Plat"
PROPERTIES: AP 89, Lot 9
ADDRESS: Read School House Road
ZONE: RR-2 (Rural Residential)
OWNER /APPLICANT: Domenico A. Picozzi

This matter came before the Coventry Technical Review Committee at its February 10, 2025 meeting as a Pre-Application for a Minor Subdivision project in accordance with Article V, § D.3. of the Coventry Subdivision & Land Development Regulations.

An application and plan were initially submitted for review on January 21. The applicant proposed to subdivide a landlocked 8.24-acre lot into four lots, each of which would be roughly 2 acres in size and host a single-family dwelling. The house lots would be accessed from a proposed private cul-de-sac extending from the paved driveway linking the Washington Oak Elementary School to Read School House Road.

The members of the Technical Review Committee reviewed the following documents related to this application when preparing the comments below:

Picozzi Plat - Plan Set.pdf
Picozzi Plat - Affidavits.pdf

TOWN ENGINEER

- 1) Submission of a Town of Coventry Soil Erosion and Sediment Control (SESC) Application will be required for the project
- 2) The Engineering Department will work with the Engineer of Record and the Fire Department to design a cul-de-sac that is appropriate for the project
- 3) Stormwater management practices must be provided to treat the water quality volume of runoff from the proposed driveways and roof tops in accordance with the Coventry Subdivision regulations and the State Stormwater Manual and the State of Rhode Island Stormwater Management Guidance for Individual Single-Family Residential Lot Development. Practices could consist of Qualifying Pervious Areas (QPA's), Rain Gardens, or Infiltration Systems such as drywells or crushed stone trenches.

- 4) A street light should be considered at the intersection of the proposed cul-de-sac and the school ROW. A second street light should be considered in the cul-de-sac
- 5) Upon completion, a Certificate of Conformance (COC) is required.

PRINCIPAL PLANNER DESIGNEE

- Planning staff recommends that the applicant take steps to ensure that the proposed cul-de-sac and roadway connection to the existing school driveway will not disrupt appropriate site lines, traffic flow, and pedestrian access on the roadway leading to the elementary school.
- Planning staff seeks a formalized easement over Town-owned school property to allow the future residents to use a portion of the driveway to access their home.
- The applicant is required to seek a dimensional variance to allow a minor subdivision in which all lots will have 0ft of frontage, as the school property does not qualify as a public right-of-way. As a result of the need for this variance, the project will be elevated for review and decision by the Planning Commission.
 - The land-locked subject parcel was created as a result of the property owners' donation of 34.27 acres to the Town in 2008 to facilitate the development of the Washington Oak Elementary School. It was at that time that the applicant's affidavits were drafted with intent to allow future development of this land-locked parcel.
- These site plans will be shared with the School Department to gather additional comments on the proposed subdivision prior to the Planning Commission pre-application meeting in February.
- Planning staff notes that the applicant will need to establish a Homeowners Association (HOA) to maintain the ownership of, and long-term maintenance of, the private cul-de-sac and will seek documentation to this end at final plan submission.
- Lastly, the Town will require a bond from the applicant to facilitate the construction of the roadway connection between the private cul-de-sac and the school driveway where such improvements are needed on Town-owned property.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

- No comment at this time.

FIRE REPRESENTATIVE

- N Dimensions of the Cul-de-sac are not included in the site plan. A 50' radius will allow fire apparatus access.
- Fire apparatus access requirements from the Cul-de-sac to the dwelling shall be met.
- Additional Street lighting in the Cul-de-sac.
- Distance from the fire hydrant at the corner of Read School House Rd. and the school access road exceeds the requirements. Although there is a fire hydrant in the parking lot of the school, that one is for the parking lot and school protection and even if available would require fire apparatus to drive past the proposed subdivision entrance to secure a water source. Attempting to use that hydrant during school hours may prove to be inefficient and/or unsafe.
- A new hydrant could be added at the entrance of the cul-de-sac on the left side.
- Water flow availability for the hydrant to cover the additional structures would need to be confirmed as additional water flow may be above the school's requirements.

POLICE CHIEF

- The Police Department advised the applicant to put a stop sign at the end of their cul-de-sac.

PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR

The Planning Commission Chair recused as this item will be heard before the Planning Commission.